

Bon Secour

National Wildlife Refuge

photo: USFWS



photo: USFWS



photo: USFWS



photo: USFWS



Jane Griess, Refuge Manager
Bon Secour NWR
12295 State Highway 180
Gulf Shores, AL 36542
Phone: 334/540 7720
Fax: 334/540 7301
E-mail: r4rw_al.bon@fws.gov

Refuge Facts

- Established: 1980.
- Acres: 6500 including 510 leased from the State of Alabama.
- Five units on the Ft. Morgan Peninsula and Little Dauphin Island.

Natural History

- Refuge is home to the endangered Alabama beach mouse.
- Refuge serves as an important stop over point for neotropical migratory birds.
- Refuge beaches serve as nesting sites for green and loggerhead sea turtles.
- Habitats include beaches and sand dunes, scrub forest, fresh and salt water marshes, fresh water swamps, and uplands.

Financial Impact of Refuge

- Three-person staff.
- Over 40,000 visitors annually.
- Current year budget (FY 98): \$197,000.

Refuge Purposes

- To conserve fish, wildlife or plants which are listed as endangered or threatened species.
- To conserve an undisturbed beach/dune ecosystem which includes a diversity of fish and wildlife.
- To serve as a living laboratory for scientists and students.
- To provide wildlife oriented recreation for the public.
- For the development, advancement, management, conservation and protection of fish and wildlife resources.

Management Tools

- Habitat restoration (dune protection and stabilization).
- Prescribed fire.
- Law enforcement.

Public Use Opportunities

- Interpretive hiking trails.
- Bird and wildlife observation.
- Fresh and saltwater fishing.
- Volunteer Program.

Questions and Answers

What exactly can I expect to see on the trail?

The majority of the wildlife here is nocturnal and the refuge is closed at night. During mid March-mid May and mid August-the end of October migration of neo-tropical migratory birds occurs, and many species may be seen. There are always chances to see foxes, coyotes, bobcats and more common residents such as alligators, squirrels, opossums and armadillos.

When can we see sea turtles nesting?

During mid May through the end of August you stand a chance of seeing one; however, the refuge is closed at night so it will be behind the condos and beachhouses.

Why are those houses on the beaches at the end of Mobile Street?

Those are inholders, that is people who chose not to sell to the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Why are some people allowed to drive on the walking trail?

Those people own property that is inside the refuge, and the trail is their access.

Do you give tours?

No. Our trails are self guided. Maps, interpretive brochures, and signs are located at the trails.